

Production Records and Production Worksheets

The service of good food and the maintenance of cost controls are the foundation of any successful meal service enterprise. To consistently produce meals that are wholesome and nutritious, taste good and that are within cost parameters requires more than a good cook's memory. Successful food service operations maintain careful records of the quantities and types of foods used in each day's meals. The USDA report submitted to Congress in 1996 describes the contribution production records make to an efficient food service operation and its ability to aid in meeting the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) and the other nutrition standards.

"Production records" are the fundamental business records which enable a food service operation to forecast future needs and control food costs by taking into consideration the potential number of customers on any given day; customer likes and dislikes as established through historical information on consumption patterns; and the cost of that food.

Production Records

Production Records, such as the *Daily and Weekly Menu Production* Records found in this binder were designed for sponsors to simply document production. These forms provide the production planner the basic elements required for the documentation process to substantiate that reimbursable meals were served. You may choose to use the production records provided OR develop one of your own that may include room for more comments regarding the menu, weather (as it may affect participation, etc.); however the following must be included for each meal:

- **Type of Meal (Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack)**
- **Forecast** – Estimated number of meals to be served varied by age group, if applicable.
- **Menu** – Menu which describes the food to be served; this may a more general overview of the meal (i.e. cold cereal, assorted juices, and milk).
- **Menu or Food Items** – The actual food items prepared. Include those items that contribute to the meal pattern as well as those that do not ('extras', condiments, etc.). Make references to a specific recipe or CN label when necessary.
- **Serving Size of Each Item** - For example: green beans were served in 1/2 cup portions. Vary by age/grade group, if applicable. May include instructions on how to portion (i.e. size of scoop to use).
- **Quantity Prepared** – The quantity of foods to prepare (e.g., 110 pounds of hamburger, two #10 cans of green beans or the specified standardized recipe to use).
- **Quantity Leftover** – The number of portions prepared and leftover (e.g. 100-2 ounce hamburger patties were prepared, 20-2 ounce patties were leftover). Recording leftover information is especially important if the leftovers will be served the following day.
- **Actual Number Served (by type)**

Production Worksheets

Included in the binder is one prototype Production Worksheet. This Worksheet should be used in place of the Production Record when the production planner has limited experience planning menus to meet the meal pattern requirements. The Production Worksheet guides the production planner, using the Food Buying Guide and other yield information to determine the amount of food to prepare.

The following tips will help production planners make best use of the worksheet:

1. The prototype has been developed for various age/grade group combinations. The age/grade grouping columns were left blank the prototype to allow the production planner to customize the form for use by their school and/or agency. Also one prototype was designed for those who have experience using column 3 of the Food Buying Guide for production planning.

2. Write the menu in the blank provided or paste the menu clipped from another source (e.g., the printed menu sent home with children).
3. Record the “forecasted” and actual meal participation in the column provided at the top of the worksheet.
4. Use the first column in section A to record the menu items or recipe. Specify the serving size of a portion for the age/grade groups in the second column.
5. Determine the total number of planned portions for each grade grouping based on forecasted participation and record this information in section B.
6. Convert the serving size from the column(s) in section B to portions listed in the reference that will be used to calculate total quantity needed. Sources of yield information include the USDA Food Buying Guide, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, and product specifications. Record the total number of planned portions in section C.
7. Use section D to determine the total amount to prepare if this information is unknown. Production planners may rely on previous records or past practice for this information and skip the calculation step. However, the known quantities may not coincide with the planned portion size. The calculations may reveal discrepancies between the number of servings based on the designated serving size and the actual number of servings prepared. This calculation allows production planners to make appropriate adjustments.
8. Use section E to record the amount of food to prepare for each menu item.
9. Post the production worksheet in a convenient location for those who prepare and/or serve the meal.
10. Use the columns in section F to record actual production and meal service activity. Space is provided on the worksheet to record leftover food and specify how they will be used.
11. Compare the advance plan with actual preparation and meal service activity. Some changes may be specific to a particular day (e.g., inclement weather or a field trip that was not communicated to food service that resulted in an excessive amount of leftover food). Use the space at the bottom of the form to make comments and add special instructions. Make adjustments to the master plan for relevant production changes.
13. Make copies of the completed and adjusted worksheet to direct activities for a repeated menu. Use the copy to capture actual production information and save recordkeeping time.